book form of ten short stories which, he had contributed
during recent years to newspapers, almanacs, and   other
periodicals. The little volume was called " Nouveaux
Contes a Ninon," and the reception given to it by   both   the
critics   and   the   public   was   distinctly
encouraging.[1]   The
former, however, cold-shouldered " La Faute de TAbbe*
Mouret," which was published by Charpentier in   1875,
though this was the first of Zola's novels that reached,   not
a great sale certainly, but one which may fairly be   called
considerable for that period. In 1876 a sixth edition   of   it
was reached, followed by another in the ensuing year.[2]

   When " Abbe* Mouret" was placed on the market,   Zola,
who seldom if ever rested, was already working on   his   next
book, " Son Excellence Eugene K-ougon," in which   he   dealt
with the political side of the Second Empire and   sketched
the life of the Imperial Court at Compiegne. Some years

previously, in 1865, when he was writing for "L'Eve'ne-
ment/' that journal had published a series of articles
signed " D," chronicling the imperial sojourn a.t   Com-
piegne ; and these had been collected in a volume   to   which
the fanciful subtitle of " Confidences d'un Valet de   Cham-
bre "[3] was given, though, in point of fact, the author was

[1] "Fouveaux Contes a Ninon," 1st and 2d editions, Paris, Charpentier,
1874,18nio, 311 pages, 3d edition, 1877 ; new editions containing the Bougon-
Macqnart genealogical tree, in 1878 and 1881; new edition, including 14 tales
and sketches, in 1885 *et seq.* ;   ditto, 32mo, with 2 etchings, 1885 ;   Con-
Duet's edition, etched frontispiece and 30 vignettes, 2 vols., sm. 8vo, 1886.

[2] "LaFaute de TAbbd   Mouret," 1st,   2d,   3d, and 4th editions, Paris,
Charpentier,   1876, 18mo,   432 pages ;   5th and 6th editions,   1876; 7th,
428 pages, 1877 ; fifty-second thousand on sale in 1903.   Of late years eighty
thousand copies have "been sold of an illustrated edition in the " Collection
Guillaume."

[8] "La Cour & Compiegne, Confidences d'nn Valet de Chamhre,"   Paris,
Librairie du Petit Journal, 1866. 18mo, 303 pages. In E. A, Yizetelly's in-